



Seattle, a Climate of Change: Meeting the Kyoto Challenge

Climate Action Plan: Highlights September 2006

Introduction

The climate crisis presents Seattle with an extraordinary challenge. The local impacts—winter flooding, summer drought, rising sea levels, heightened wildfire risk, receding glaciers and declining snow pack—pose serious risks to our economy and our quality of life.

In February of 2005, Mayor Greg Nickels challenged fellow mayors across the country to join with Seattle in pledging to meet or exceed the Kyoto Protocol's emissions-reduction goals. So far, more than 300 mayors, representing 51 million Americans in 46 states have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

The Seattle Climate Action Plan is the way Seattle will meet those goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions as a city to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012. It is guided largely by the March 2006 recommendations of the mayor's Green Ribbon Commission on Climate Protection.

The challenge is great. Success will depend on individuals, businesses and the community working together in ways large and small to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The plan will support individuals in reducing emissions at home, at work and on the road through investments in transit, conservation and education. It will help businesses conserve energy and implement climate protection improvements. And it will strengthen and expand the City of Seattle's effort to reduce its emissions as it provides services to people across the city.

Mayor Nickels and the City of Seattle believe strongly that local action is a critical part of the global solution; Seattle's successes will provide a model for policies that must ultimately be developed worldwide to stabilize the climate. Further, the technological innovation that will accompany the necessary shift in our energy consumption will generate significant economic opportunity.

Seattle is more than up to the task of greening our own community and leading others. The government has reduced its own climate pollution by 60 percent since 1990, led by City Light, the only electric utility to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. Seattle's waste reduction and water and electricity conservation programs are among the nation's best.

The Climate Action Plan

The plan details substantial new investments to encourage businesses and residents to take action and to expand the City's emissions-cutting programs. The mayor has proposed \$37 million over the next two years for climate protection actions such as expanded transit service, and improved and new bicycling and pedestrian facilities. It includes money to convert to more climate-friendly vehicles and equipment throughout the City, to start a new business partnership devoted to climate protection, and to launch a broad campaign to educate residents and businesses about the link

between climate disruption and fossil fuel consumption.

The funding sources include \$34 million from “*Bridging the Gap*,” which voters will consider in November, and \$3 million in the mayor’s 2007 and 2008 budget proposal.

The plan also extends existing climate-protection initiatives, like Seattle City Light’s net-zero emissions efforts, smart growth policies and regulations to promote development in urban centers and the City’s green fleet and green building programs.

The City and the community’s progress will be measured, and the plan updated, every two years by an interdepartmental Climate Team coordinated by the Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE). OSE will update the community’s and the City’s greenhouse gas inventories every three years.

Successful implementation of Seattle Climate Action Plan will move us substantially toward the Kyoto target. But, of course, Kyoto is just a beginning. To stave off the potentially catastrophic impacts of climate disruption will require a sustained effort well beyond 2012 and well beyond Seattle.

The challenge before us is big. No city in America is more capable of exceeding it.

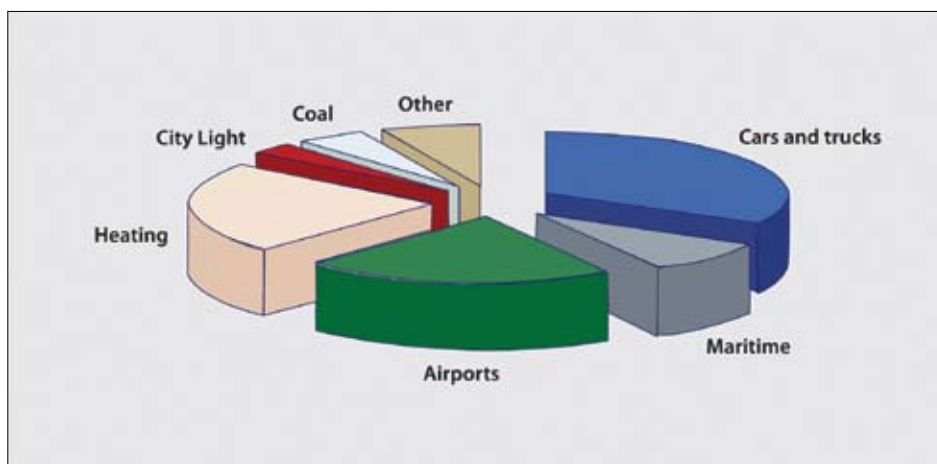
To get to the Kyoto goal, Seattle must cut its emissions by about 680,000 metric tons.

The sources of Seattle’s climate pollution are really no different from any other region. Our greenhouse gases come almost entirely from using energy in everyday life. Roughly half the climate pollution in Seattle comes from burning fossil fuels to move ourselves and our goods in cars, trucks, buses, trains and airplanes. Another quarter comes from heating our homes and buildings, primarily with natural gas.

The community will cut greenhouse gas emissions in three major ways: reducing our dependence on cars, increasing fuel efficiency and the use of biofuels, and conserving and using cleaner energy in our homes, businesses and institutions. The City will pursue policies to bolster its leadership in climate protection and to inspire broader action.

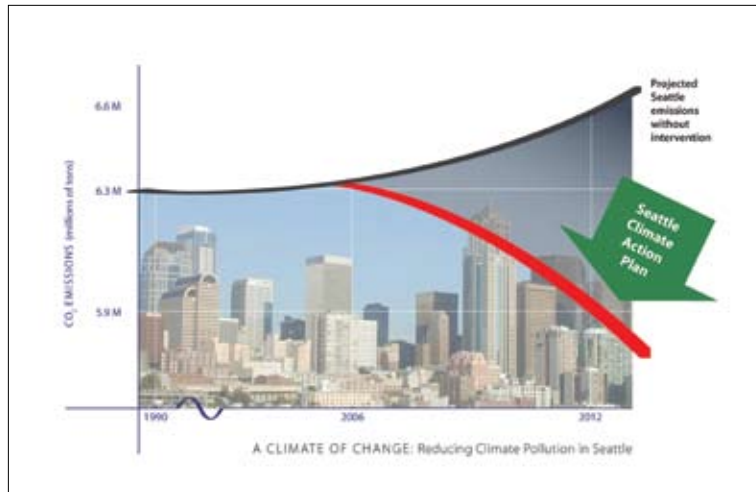
Reduce Seattle’s Dependence on Cars

- The City will invest \$1.5 million to increase transit service in Seattle, which King County’s *Transit Now* ballot measure, if it passes, will match 2 for 1, for an estimated 45,000 additional hours of service citywide.



PROJECTED 2012 SEATTLE EMISSIONS SOURCES

Cars and trucks: trucking and passenger transportation, including gasoline, diesel, and natural gas vehicles; **Maritime:** Ships, trains, ferries, construction equipment; **Airports:** air travel; **Heating:** natural gas (including commercial and industrial uses), heating oil, and propane heat; **City Light:** Seattle City Light emissions; **Coal:** coal from various Seattle-based industries; **Other:** closed landfills, non-road gasoline, distillate oil, liquid propane gas, fireplaces.



To meet its Kyoto goal, Seattle must cut emissions by 680,000 metric tons

- The City has committed \$3 million for transit corridor and reliability improvements, which *Transit Now* will match with an additional 5,000 service hours, allowing faster more reliable bus service in the city's most congested routes to Downtown (Ballard, West Seattle, Pine Street, First Hill).
- The City will double the existing 25 miles of marked and striped bicycle lanes.
- The City will make walking more attractive by installing 200 new pedestrian curb ramps and upgrading 50 marked crosswalks to national safety standards by the end of 2008.
- The City will implement a 10 percent commercial parking tax to be phased in over three years, beginning in July 2007.
- Mayor Nickels has allocated \$100,000 to work with regional partners to analyze and develop road pricing scenarios and address any legal and implementation issues.
- The City will begin increasing its biodiesel blend from 20 percent biodiesel (B20) to as much as 40 percent (B40) in 2007.
- The Seattle Police Department will begin in 2007 to transition all of its non-pursuit vehicles to efficient gas-electric hybrids.
- The City will examine the use of smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles as taxicabs and offering incentives to taxicab owners to use gas-electric hybrid vehicles, culminating in recommendations to the Mayor by the end of 2007. In addition, the City will continue to work with King County, the Port of Seattle and taxi companies to explore ways of reducing the amount of taxi "deadheading" in the region.

Increase Fuel Efficiency and Use of Biofuels

- The City, partnering with Puget Sound Clean Cities Coalition and the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, will increase fuel efficiency and the use of biofuels by commercial fleets through a "Smart Fleets" educational outreach program.
- In 2007, Seattle Public Utilities and City Light will implement a comprehensive shower-head and faucet aerator program for all residential customers to conserve hot water heated by gas and electricity. Program materials will feature greenhouse gas reductions as one of many benefits.

Achieve More Efficient and Cleaner Energy for Homes and Businesses

- City's Light's mitigation program has already sealed its net-zero emissions status for 2007 by participating in offset programs and has committed to acquire at least 7.5 average megawatts through conservation measures in 2007 and 2008.

- The City will hire a dedicated energy specialist and implement cost-effective conservation and energy efficiency measures in City facilities.
- Seattle Parks and Recreation will install covers on the Helene Madison and Ballard swimming pools, which are heated by natural gas, in 2007. In addition, in partnership with Puget Sound Energy, Parks is establishing a Resource Conservation program to identify and implement cost-effective energy conservation measures.



Extend the City's Leadership

- Seattle Public Utilities, the City's second-largest department, will complete its own greenhouse gas emissions inventory, reduction target and action plan.
- The City will fully mitigate all business-related air travel by City employees beginning in 2007 by purchasing carbon-offset projects annually.
- The City will launch a campaign to encourage all 10,000 City employees to reduce climate pollution on the job and at home.
- A newly-created Department of Executive Administration Green Team will assess and, where appropriate, promote the purchase and use of climate-friendly products, such as super-efficient "80-plus" computers and servers.
- OSE and the Department of Finance will work with the Seattle City Employees Retirement System to

explore options for climate-friendly investing that are consistent with State law governing the System's investments. This may include actions such as assessing both the risks to City investments posed by climate disruption and the opportunities to invest in climate solutions; asking companies in the City's existing investment portfolio to disclose climate risk information through reporting mechanisms such as the Carbon Disclosure Project or Global Reporting Initiative; and joining the Investor Network on Climate Risk.

Inspire Action

- The Seattle Climate Partnership, begun with support from OSE, will provide Seattle area employers with resources for assessing their climate impacts and implementing strategies for reducing emissions. The Partnership will also develop strategies for achieving emissions through relationships with employees, customers, suppliers and vendors.
- The Department of Neighborhoods will launch a Neighborhood Climate Protection Matching Fund to promote and help finance neighborhood-based climate protection projects such as local biodiesel cooperatives, tool- and car-sharing programs, anti-idling campaigns and community energy conservation actions.
- The City, in partnership with Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, King County, Climate Solutions, Puget Sound Energy, AAA-Washington and others, will launch in early 2007 a regional campaign, including a "Drive Smart" program, to engage and inspire Puget Sound area residents and businesses to incorporate climate protection action into their daily affairs.



City of Seattle

Mayor Greg Nickels
For more information:
www.seattle.gov/climate